

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed January 12, 2005, and telephone discussions of the Office Action with Diego Gutierrez, Supervisory Patent Examiner.

Claims 1-16 have been allowed.

The Examiner has objected to the previous amendment as introducing new matter into the disclosure of the invention in the specification as filed.

By the present amendment, the previous amendments to the specification are cancelled.

However, the amendment to claim 1 is not cancelled, as it is believed that the claim language of "d) imaging nuclei spins at an echo time, TE, less than TR" is fully supported by the specification.

As discussed with Mr. Gutierrez by telephone on January 26, 2005, paragraph [0005] in the Summary of the Invention broadly describes the invention. Paragraph [0006] then describes one embodiment for suppressing fat while imaging blood where the SSFP signal is refocused (i.e. an echo signal at echo time, TE) halfway between the RF excitation pulses, or repetition time, TR. However, the echo signals need not be exactly halfway ($TR/2$) so long as the echo signals occur within the repetition time, otherwise there would be no echoes. Accordingly, claim 1 as amended describes the echo time, TE as less than repetition rate, TR, as supported by the specification as filed which describes one embodiment of $TE = TR/2$; that is, TE being less than TR.

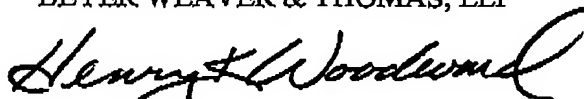
It is respectfully submitted that claim 1 as amended is fully supported by the specification as filed since in the one described embodiment the echo time, TE, is less than the repetition rate, TR, as now claimed.

Mr. Gutierrez indicated that the amendment of the specification should overcome the objections made thereto and that the amendment of claim 1 appears to be supported by the specification as filed and accordingly should be allowable, subject to a closer review of the application as filed and prosecution thereof with Ms. Vargas, Examiner.

Favorable consideration is respectfully requested and passage of the application to issue with allowed claims 1-16 is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any question regarding the present amendment and response, a telephone call to the undersigned attorney is requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Henry K. Woodward".

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